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Proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019

Part two: biennial programme plan

Programme 22
Palestine refugees

Contents

	Page
Overall orientation	2
Subprogramme 1. Palestine refugee rights under international law are protected and promoted	3
Subprogramme 2. Palestine refugee health is protected and disease burden is reduced	4
Subprogramme 3. School-age children complete quality, equitable and inclusive basic education	5
Subprogramme 4. Palestine refugee capabilities are strengthened for increased livelihood opportunities	6
Subprogramme 5. Palestine refugees are able to meet their basic human needs of food, shelter and environmental health	7
Legislative mandates	8

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Overall orientation

22.1 The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established within the United Nations system as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly by the Assembly in resolution 302 (IV), from which the Agency derives its mandate to provide assistance to Palestine refugees. Since starting operations in 1950, UNRWA has adapted and enhanced its programmes to meet the increasingly complex needs of Palestine refugees and to provide them with a measure of protection and stability amid chronic conflict in the region, within available resources.

22.2 UNRWA reports directly to the General Assembly. Overall advice and support regarding Agency programmes and activities are provided to the Commissioner-General by the 30-delegation Advisory Commission, which includes representatives of the Agency's major donors and host Governments.

22.3 The mission of UNRWA is to help Palestine refugees achieve their full potential in human development under the difficult circumstances in which they live. In line with this mission, as part of its medium-term strategy for 2016-2021, the Agency will work towards five strategic outcomes: (a) Palestine refugee rights under international law are protected and promoted; (b) Palestine refugee health is protected and disease burden is reduced; (c) school-age children complete quality, equitable and inclusive basic education; (d) Palestine refugee capabilities are strengthened for increased livelihood opportunities; and (e) Palestine refugees are able to meet their basic human needs of food, shelter and environmental health. Progress towards these objectives will drive UNRWA operations during the biennium 2018-2019.

22.4 Under these five strategic outcomes, UNRWA aims to achieve its objectives by maintaining and improving the provision of education and health services, relief and social support, microfinance services, infrastructure and camp improvement within refugee camps, and protection, for the benefit of registered Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a population that is projected to exceed 6 million by 2019.

22.5 The Agency also provides emergency assistance to more than 1.5 million Palestine refugees in acute distress as a result of armed conflict in the occupied Palestinian territory and, more recently, in the Syrian Arab Republic. UNRWA will continue to provide such services, as necessary, as well as, on an exceptional and temporary basis, services to non-refugees currently displaced and in serious need of continued assistance, as mandated by the General Assembly in resolution 2252 (ES-V) and, most recently, in resolution 68/77.

22.6 UNRWA strategy is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. Poverty and human rights, which are major components of the Goals, are also at the core of the UNRWA medium-term strategy. With respect to the former, both the Goals and the medium-term strategy recognize that poverty is multidimensional and that its mitigation and eradication can be achieved only through a coordinated, multisectoral response. The Goals focus on achieving food security, attaining gender equality, achieving peaceful and inclusive societies responding to changing health needs, equitable and inclusive quality education, water and sanitation and reducing inequalities, among other things.

22.7 UNRWA will also continue its efforts to mainstream protection and a gender perspective into its activities, including with a view to meeting the needs of Palestine refugee children, persons with disabilities, youth and other vulnerable groups. These efforts will bring the Agency closer to fulfilling its obligations under relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, including paragraph 13 of resolution 68/78, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other applicable international instruments.

22.8 UNRWA is almost entirely dependent on voluntary funding to implement its programmes. It has contended with chronic funding shortfalls and with acute funding uncertainties induced by economic and political volatility. The Agency will continue to seek the additional human and financial resources that it needs to sustain and improve the quality of the services it provides to refugees, while maintaining cost-conscious management and the operational flexibility required to respond to unforeseen disruptions to lives and livelihoods in Palestine refugee communities.

Subprogramme 1
Palestine refugee rights under international law are protected and promoted

Objective of the Organization: Palestine refugee rights under international law are protected

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	*Indicators of achievement*
(a) Duty bearers are held accountable for violations of international law through monitoring, reporting and advocacy	Percentage of UNRWA interventions on protection issues that prompt positive responses from authorities
(b) Vulnerable and at-risk individuals and communities benefit from protection responses	Percentage of individuals identified as experiencing a protection risk (women, boys, girls and men) provided with assistance

Strategy

22.9 The strategy in attaining the objective includes:

(a) Protection mainstreaming in and through UNRWA services, to address protection challenges that arise from UNRWA programmes and service delivery in education, health, relief and social services, microfinance and infrastructure and camp improvement, in both development and humanitarian settings;

(b) Protection of at-risk groups, including women, children and persons with disabilities, through gender-based violence and disability programming and child protection interventions;

(c) Targeted and stand-alone protection programming to empower and promote the resilience of Palestine refugees to protection threats;

(d) Monitoring reporting and advocacy to promote respect for the rights of Palestine refugees under international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law;

(e) Ensuring that UNRWA policies setting out standards for processing registration uphold international standards.

Subprogramme 2
Palestine refugee health is protected and disease burden is reduced

Objective of the Organization: Palestine refugee health is protected and the disease burden is reduced

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	*Indicators of achievement*
(a) People-centred primary health-care system using the family health team model	(i) Average number of daily medical consultations per doctor
	(ii) Percentage of women in compliance with the minimum four antenatal care visits
	(iii) Percentage of non-communicable disease patients coming to health centres regularly
	(iv) Number of Expanded Programme on Immunization vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks
(b) Efficient hospital support services provided	Number of UNRWA hospital admissions for secondary and tertiary care accessed by vulnerable patients

Strategy

22.10 The strategy in attaining the objective includes:

(a) Continued provision of universally accessible quality primary-health care using the family health team model;

(b) Provision of preventive and curative oral health care, including screening for new school entrants and assessments for preschool children;

(c) Continued school health services to enhance behavioural change, including through expanded health education and promotion and preventive screening for vision and hearing;

(d) Quality pharmaceutical, laboratory and radiology services across all fields of operation to support diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions;

(e) Support for persons with disabilities to ensure that their needs are adequately identified and responded to;

(f) Provide access to secondary and tertiary care for those with life-threatening illnesses requiring life-saving/life-supporting medical care treatment who lack the financial assets or insurance coverage to attain it.

Subprogramme 3
School-age children complete quality, equitable and inclusive basic education

Objective of the Organization: School-age children complete quality, equitable and inclusive basic education

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	*Indicators of achievement*
(a) Quality learning in conducive learning environments for all students	(i) Mean score of students in Monitoring of Learning Achievement higher-order thinking skills
	(ii) Teaching and learning practices align with reform criteria
(b) Inclusive access to basic education is ensured	(i) Percentage of students identified with a disability receiving educational support meeting their specific needs
	(ii) Repetition rate in basic education (elementary)
	(iii) Repetition rate in basic education (preparatory)
(c) Equitable basic education is ensured	Gap in student performance levels in Monitoring of Learning Achievement testing

Strategy

22.11 The strategy in attaining the objective includes:

(a) Ensuring continued universal access to quality, inclusive and equitable basic education (elementary and preparatory);

(b) Ensuring continued universal access to quality, inclusive and equitable secondary education in Lebanon;

(c) Ensuring a coherent approach to teacher professional development and support;

(d) Provision of pre-service teacher training where conditions require.

Subprogramme 4
Palestine refugee capabilities are strengthened for increased livelihood opportunities

Objective of the Organization: Palestine refugee capabilities are strengthened for increased livelihood opportunities

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	*Indicators of achievement*
(a) Palestine refugee capabilities are strengthened	(i) Percentage of social safety net programme students enrolled in vocational training centres, UNRWA educational science faculties and the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts
	(ii) Percentage of social safety net programme graduates from vocational training centres, UNRWA educational science faculties and the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts
(b) Refugees have improved access to livelihood opportunities	(i) Number of clients accessing financial services (including marginalized groups)
	(ii) Index score of refugee living conditions and livelihood opportunities in identified priority camps
	(iii) Total number of micro-entrepreneurs with loans

Strategy

22.12 The strategy in attaining the objective includes:

(a) Provision of technical and vocational education and training to refugees, with a focus on those most in need, through trade and short-term courses;

(b) Provision of placement and career guidance to youth;

(c) Preparation and implementation of camp improvement plans to enhance communities' capacities and assets;

(d) Provision of university scholarships for refugees unable to access tertiary education;

(e) Provision of income generation and livelihood interventions, social services and youth programme and civic engagement interventions focusing on the poor and marginalized;

(f) Continue ongoing efforts to make the microfinance programme independent of UNRWA in order to give the programme the best possible chance of expanding its operations and benefiting increased numbers of people.

Subprogramme 5
Palestine refugees are able to meet their basic human needs of food, shelter and environmental health

Objective of the Organization: Palestine refugees are able to meet their basic human needs of food, shelter and environmental health

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	*Indicators of achievement*
(a) Abject poor refugees are better able to meet their food needs	Percentage of abject poverty gap bridged through UNRWA social transfer
(b) Improve living conditions for poor refugees	(i) Number of families benefiting from improved shelter conditions (non-emergency)
	(ii) Percentage of rehabilitated shelters meeting UNRWA shelter rehabilitation protection standards
(c) Environmental health standards are met	(i) Percentage of shelters in camps connected to adequate water supply services
	(ii) Percentage of shelters connected to adequate sewerage networks

Strategy

22.13 The strategy in attaining the objective includes:

(a) Targeted food assistance to abject poor refugees, wherever possible and appropriate through a cash-transfer mechanism;

(b) Provision of humanitarian assistance to refugees, including the most vulnerable and those who have been displaced internally or to other UNRWA fields;

(c) Provision of temporary shelter to refugees forced to flee owing to conflict or natural hazards;

(d) Gradual rehabilitation and repair of substandard shelters for the poorest refugees;

(e) Implement projects addressing water resource, supply and networks, sewerage networks and water drainage in camps suffering from severely deteriorated environmental infrastructure conditions;

(f) Provision of solid waste management services where circumstances demand.

Legislative mandates

General Assembly resolutions

302 (IV)	Assistance to Palestine refugees
2252 (ES-V)	Humanitarian assistance
2656 (XXV)	Establishment of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
3331 B (XXIX)	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
68/76	Assistance to Palestine refugees
68/77	Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities
68/78	Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East